

END HEREDITARY RELIGION, DISCUSSIONS OF THIS TOPIC FROM THE CATHOLIC BACKGROUND ANGLE

The Catholic Church obligates Catholic parents to make Catholic believers of their children. It uses Catholic schools to help in this process. Children are forced to learn religion at school and to pray.

Young children are taken to Church to pray and be indoctrinated. Wafers said to be the flesh of Christ are thrust into the mouths of seven-year-olds in Catholicism. Children are expected despite their naivety and inexperience to believe and are treated as true believers. This is a prime example of manipulation on the part of the Church. The evil of blind faith and blind obedience is demanded of the children, degrading them, debasing them, abusing them. The evil is applauded. Blind faith is treacherous and the priests and other clergy know it so don't believe their explanation that their having taken advantage of children is about instilling good habits. You don't need to instil blind faith in a child to instil good habits.

Childlike faith, though praised by Christ, is harmful and gives the clergy an unfair advantage. Children may believe lots of things on blind faith but that is necessary unlike religious belief. There is nothing we can do but tell them that the sea exists even if they have never seen the sea or pictures of it. But that is nothing like telling them that their parents' religion is true for when there are so many different religions it follows that all you can do is tell them what different ones teach and guide them to make their own choice when they grow up. We have to tell what is proven but it is wrong to tell them what is not proven. Nobody can prove their religion - and it is exceptionally hard work if they can - therefore nobody has their right to indoctrinate their children. Education is to be fact-based. Otherwise its not education. Religion does not give evidence for religion to children to help them make up their own minds. Religion is manipulative.

Ideas, like actions, have consequences, regardless of what we might think. This is true. And so the Church argues, "The child not having a Catholic education makes an negative impact on his or her life." But that assumes that the religion is best for them. It also assumes that the religion has occult power to heal sinners. It assumes that Catholicism is the true religion. If the child knows that Catholicism is not the true religion then it would be wrong to apply any kind of pressure on her or him to believe or worship. It is intolerant to argue that it will make her or him bad or badder if you respect her or his rights. Its denying that Catholics are no more holier than say Protestants.

Children should be taught and encouraged to think. They should not be told what to think. So it is none of the Church's business what they believe. It is none of the parents' business. And it is not the business of the state.

The Church knows that children are easily conditioned and manipulated. The Church does not teach the faith to children out of respect for the child but out of disrespect.

Some say that it is not the Church's fault that we are so easily conditioned as children. But this misses the point. The Church knows that children are vulnerable and exploits that. The result of conditioning is that children think they have faith when they do not. If you really believe something you don't need to be virtually hypnotised to accept it.

The example of children being indoctrinated because of their naivety and vulnerability is followed by Muslims and fanatics with disastrous and tragic results. It has turned children into killers and suicide bombers.

Even if it is conditioning and not religion in itself that causes the trouble in the world that is, on the surface, attributable to religion. Religion is the most dangerous conditioner out there. If it is a government that does it at least its claims can be falsified or verified. With religion there is no adequate or rational evidence. To claim you believe something without proper evidence shows incredible arrogance. It can only lead to hatred against those who dissent from your faith.

Religious preachers show little concern for what a person has to go through when they find out that their religion is wrong or absurd. A Catholic can suffer guilt and fear for years after realising the faith is wrong. They are conditioned to feel bad and evil for changing their minds about the veracity and correctness of the religion. They have an addiction they are resisting.

Secularists should promote secularism. If it upsets believers it is better doing it now than later. What if a person who needs comfort from their religion discovers its a trick while they are fighting cancer? What about vulnerable children? A person who uses faith as a crutch has not dealt with the reason they need a crutch. It would be better for them if they were helped to throw the crutch away and deal with their issues without it steaming up their glasses.

Religious faith is an addiction to some degree. This is easily seen from the theologians who when confronted with proof that their faith is wrong absorb it and seem to keep believing. If there was real sincerity there, if there was no fear, if

there was no psychological problem they would give honour to the truth. They would exorcise the curse of self-deception.

If theologians were really open to the truth there would be little difference between them. For example, Catholic and Evangelical theologians would have few theological differences because they would really be listening and really learning and really thinking. But they differ greatly and many Evangelical theologians do not consider Catholics to be Christians.

THE CRIME OF RELIGIOUS FAITH IS: PEOPLE ARE LEFT WITH A WAY TO COPE WITH THE HARSH REALITIES AND FEARS OF LIFE BUT NOT WITH A WAY TO CHANGE THEM.

Take the cancer patient. He or she might feel some relief when praying. But soon he will feel all the despair and fear again.

Those who promote religious faith to people who are troubled do not have those people's true concerns at heart. The person who tells a person with commitment issues and who has promiscuous sex to pray instead of seeing a therapist is cheating that person. They are manipulating that person to dull pain with rationalisations. If they tell the person to prayerfully go and see a therapist they are encouraging that person to believe that prayer is only using the therapist as a tool to heal and that the therapist in herself or himself is useless. That is dangerous if prayer does not work. It is making the progress less effectual. Christianity's scriptures teach that suffering is something to be boasting about (Romans 5:1-5) for sufferings bring patience etc. The scriptures forbid us to boast about our good deeds (Ephesians 2: 8 - 10) so nobody can pretend that it means that we are to boast about how we handle suffering. It means we are to boast about suffering but not boast about the good results it brings.

This is masochism.

People say, "A Catholic priest is appointed to teach and support the Catholic faith. It is crazy to ask a priest to teach Catholics to question that the faith is true." To that I have to reply that they don't just teach the Catholic faith at all. They teach the Catholic faith as true. That is a different thing. They intend to teach truth. If so they should advocate truth even if they find it contradicts the faith. The priest claims to be in the job of teaching truth so we can indeed expect him to be honest - even if it gets him in trouble.

Suppose the power of choice exists and you are given a choice between being tortured to death and dying your hair green. You choose to dye your hair green. You choose it freely. You were forced into making the choice but it was still a choice because you could have chosen to be tortured to death. Its a lie to say you had no choice. The Catholic teachings that we are born in original sin and are obligated to obey the pope by baptism into the Church and to become saints who have a life of misery and who will go to Hell forever if we die in unrepented serious sin say something about the believer. And it is this. The believer wants these horrible teachings to be true deep down even if he feels revulsion for them. The atheist does not acquiesce to evil to that degree. Miracles in Christianity no matter what laudable purpose they seem to have are used to encourage these evil ideas.

Our reason belongs to God if he exists. Thus we should only read books that defend what he has revealed - if anything. It is still the law of the Catholic Church that you are not allowed to read any books condemning Church teaching unless you are insulated against being influenced by these books. You insulate yourself by knowing the refutations given of them by the Church. It follows that if there are books that the Church and its theologians cannot answer, these should not be read. This is really the Church trying to protect itself from the truth or possible truth.

The believers say that the truth does not need people to lie and use threats to promote it. They also say that of original sin - the sin or bias against God that we are born with - our vision is clouded and we can't see the truth and prefer error to what God has revealed. Even if they condemn aggressive and dishonest attempts to get people to believe, they are paving the way for them. They are forcing them to be necessary.

Religious indoctrination of children is wrong.